

STATEMENT OF J. STROM THURMOND, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA,  
AT THE FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION HEARING ON THE PETITION  
OF THE LYLES FORD TRI-COUNTY POWER AUTHORITY FOR A PRELIMI-  
NARY PERMIT TO BEGIN HYDRO-ELECTRIC CONSTRUCTION ON THE  
BROAD AND CONGAREE RIVERS IN SOUTH CAROLINA AT THE FEDERAL  
COURT BUILDING, COLUMBIA, S.C. 10:30 A.M. SEPTEMBER 23, 1947.

The rivers of South Carolina are great natural resources which should be used for the benefit of all the people.

Rivers are used for several purposes. Navigation requires a regular flow. Flood control needs low reservoirs at flood time. Power development must have storage of water which can be released irregularly to serve peak energy demands.

To insure the proper use of water resources, planning must be on a "river basin" basis so that the water may be employed in all needful ways to benefit the region as a whole. The day is happily over when private parties may exploit one good dam site in contravention to the people's interest in the entire basin.

Congress has placed river control under the Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Power Commission.

The Army Engineers have been engaged for many years in making thorough study of the maximum utilization of the waters of the entire Santee system for purposes of flood control, navigation, and the generation of hydro-electric energy.

In considering the proper use of this system, the Army Engineers filed with Congress in 1944 a report which recommends the construction of hydro-electric plants on the Broad River at Blairs and at Fort Shoals, and of a re-regulating dam across the Congaree at Columbia, as the first stage of a comprehensive development of the basin. The Lyles Ford Authority is asking for a preliminary permit to build this first stage.

This first stage development, with the necessary contraction work on the Congaree, would provide a navigable channel 8 feet deep and 150 feet wide from Columbia to the head of the Santee Lake. With the completed Santee-Cooper development, this would mean practical navigation from Columbia to Charleston, and from Charleston through the Inland Waterway north to New York and South to Miami. This would make Columbia an inland port of considerable importance.

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It would benefit the entire State.

The development would create three-quarters of a billion kilowatt hours of electrical energy, which is roughly equivalent to one-quarter of the amount now generated in South Carolina. Industry goes where electric power is found.

The elimination of floods in the Congaree Valley incident to this development would make much rich river bottom land available for farming.

The Lyles Ford Authority proposes to construct a re-regulating dam at Columbia and two large hydro-electric plants at Blairs and Frost Shoals. The Columbia re-regulating dam will catch the water discharged from dams on both the Saluda and Broad Rivers and will release it so as to protect the navigable depth of the Congaree River, keeping it at an 8-foot level at all times. The present depth sometimes fall as low as two or three feet. The re-regulation dam will back water up to Lake Murray on the Saluda River and up the Broad River to the site of the Frost Shoals dam.

In contrast, the South Carolina Electric and Gas Company has applied to the Federal Power Commission for a license to construct a small dam on the Saluda River about midway between Columbia and Lake Murray.

The construction of the dam proposed by the Company would make impossible the building of the re-regulating dam at Columbia. The Columbia re-regulating dam would flood any dam built on the Saluda River between Columbia and Lake Murray.

In addition, from a power standpoint, the dam proposed by the Company would be far less effective than the other dams proposed by the Army Engineers and the Lyles Ford Authority.

In the orderly development of the water resources of South Carolina, the fullest consideration should be given to the ultimate goal. No dams should be permitted which would prevent the full employment of our water sources.

In cases in which private power companies are prepared to make full development of water resources, I favor licensing them. However,



when they are not prepared for such development, they should be denied licenses to build dams which would interfere with the ultimate goal.

Therefore, I urge that the preliminary permit be granted to the Lyles Ford Authority.